

**REMARKS**

This Amendment and Reply is intended to be completely responsive to the Final Office Action mailed February 10, 2009. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present Application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow. Claims 5, 8-10, 12, 13, 16, 19 and 20 have been canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits. Claims 2-4, 6, 15 and 17 were previously canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits. Claims 1, 11 and 14 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, Claims 1, 7, 11, 14 and 18 will be pending in the present Application upon entry of this Amendment and Reply.

A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the Application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

**Drawings**

On page 2 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner objected to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a) for allegedly failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Specifically, the Examiner stated that “the ‘cylindrical peripheral surface’ (all claims) and the ‘irreversibly removable snap-in connection’ (claims 8 and 19) must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s).”

In response, Applicants have elected to cancel the subject matter relating to a “cylindrical peripheral surface” from the claims without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits. Applicants have also canceled Claims 8 and 19 without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a).

**Specification**

On page 3 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner reminded Applicants of the proper language and format for an abstract of disclosure, but did not indicate that the abstract in the present Application is improper or point to anything in the abstract that was a concern. Rather, the Examiner stated:

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as 'means' and 'said,' should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, 'The disclosure concerns,' 'The disclosure defined by this invention,' 'The disclosure describes,' etc.

Applicants have reviewed the abstract of the present Application, and believe that it conforms to the language and format guidelines set forth above by the Examiner. For example, the abstract states:

A component, in particular a sun visor that is designed for use in a vehicle, is disclosed having a structural part and a cover part, the cover part being connected to the structural part by a removable connection. In order to produce the connection, the cover element performs a connection displacement in relation to the structural part in a tangential direction to at least one main extension direction of the cover element.

The abstract is approximately seventy words, is written as a single paragraph, does not include term "means" or "said," is clear and concise and does not include phrases such as "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc. Accordingly, no changes have been made to the abstract. If the Examiner believes that any

portion of the Abstract is improper, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner specifically identify any such portion.

**Claim Objections**

On pages 3 and 4 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner objected to Claims 1, 5, 7-14, 16 and 18-20 for allegedly including one or more informalities. Specifically, the Examiner stated that “[a]ll occurrences of ‘in at least one of a/the plane and a/the cylindrical peripheral surface’ should be changed to ‘in the plane.’” The Examiner also stated that in Claim 1, line 6, “the introduction of ‘the cover element having at least one main extension direction’ is repetitive of the earlier limitation ‘in a direction substantially tangential to at least one main extension direction of the cover element’ on line 5.” The Examiner further stated that in Claim 16, line 2, “either (1) ‘the’ should be inserted before ‘at least one main extension direction’ or else (2) claim 16 should be deleted.”

In response, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 11 and 14 to address the concerns of the Examiner. For example, independent Claims 1, 11 and 14 have been amended to only recite “in the plane” rather than “in at least one of the plane and the cylindrical peripheral surface.” Also, independent Claims 1, 11 and 14 have been amended to recite “the at least one main extension direction” subsequent to the introduction of “the cover element having at least one main extension direction.” Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to Claims 1, 7, 11, 14 and 18. As set forth above, Claims 5, 8-10, 12, 13, 16, 19 and 20 have been canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits.

**Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112**

On pages 4 and 5 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1, 5, 7-14, 16 and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 1, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Specifically, the Examiner stated the subject matter of a “cylindrical peripheral surface” is unclear from the description and drawings of the original Specification.

Applicants submit that this rejection is now moot. As set forth above, independent Claims 1, 11 and 14 have been amended to only recite “in the plane” rather than “in at least one of the plane and the cylindrical peripheral surface.” Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1, 7, 11, 14 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 1. As set forth above, Claims 5, 8-10, 12, 13, 16, 19 and 20 have been canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits.

**Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103**

1. Claims 1, 5, 7 and 9-13

On pages 5-8 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1, 5, 7 and 9-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,580,118 to Crotty (“Crotty”) in view of Japanese Patent No. 2002127819 to Gokuritsu (“Gokuritsu”). This rejection should be withdrawn because Crotty, whether taken alone or in proper combination with and Gokuritsu, fails to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed invention.

For example, independent Claim 1 (as amended) recites a “component” comprising, among other elements, a “cover element being provided in the form of a frame . . . at least one first sliding element on one of [a] structural part and the cover element . . . [and] at least one second sliding element on the other one of the structural part and the cover element, the at least one second sliding element cooperates with the at least one first sliding element for locking the cover element relative to the relative to the structural part, at least relative to a movement perpendicular to the plane.”

Also, independent Claim 11 (as amended) recites a “method for producing a component” comprising, among other elements, “providing a structural part and a cover element, the cover element being provided in the form of a frame . . . [and] arranging the cover element and the structural part relative to one another such that at least one first sliding element on one of the cover element and the structural part and at least one second sliding element on the other of the

cover element and the structural part are at least partially in contact, the at least one first sliding element being arranged in the plane and comprising a first set of three sliding elements, the at least one second sliding element comprising a second set of three sliding elements, the first set of three sliding elements and the second set of three sliding elements are configured to be connected respectively by the connecting movement for locking the cover element relative to the structural part, at least relative to a movement perpendicular to the plane.”

Applicants submit that Crotty, whether taken alone or in proper combination with and Gokuritsu, does not disclose such a component or a method for producing such a component. In rejecting Claims 1, 5, 7 and 9-13, the Examiner stated that Crotty discloses “first sliding elements (100),” “second sliding elements (106)” and a cover element that “is provided in a manner of a frame (90).” The Examiner acknowledged that Crotty does not “disclose a snap-in connection provided between the cover element and the structural part for locking the cover element relative to the structural part, relative to a movement in the plane.” In an attempt to correct this deficiency, the Examiner cited to Gokuritsu for allegedly disclosing:

[A] vehicular room lamp mounted to a molded ceiling with a reversibly removable snap-in connection (6, 11) provided between a cover element (10) and a structural part (2) for locking the cover element relative to the structural part, wherein the connecting movement of the cover element relative to the structural part is provided to produce the connection, in a direction substantially tangential to at least one main extension direction of the cover element, substantially in a plane, and the connecting movement is carried out substantially in the plane; first sliding elements (8) on the structural part, the first sliding elements being arranged in the plane; second sliding elements (13) for locking the cover element relative to the structural part, at least relative to a movement perpendicular to the plane.

The Examiner concluded that “[a]t the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the component of Crotty, III, to employ a reversibly removable snap-in connection, as taught by Gokuritsu.” Applicants respectfully disagree.

At the outset, Applicants submit that, contrary to the position of the Examiner, Crotty does not disclose, teach or suggest providing at least one of a first sliding element or at least one of a second sliding element on a cover element that is in the form of a frame, as required by independent Claims 1 and 11 (as amended). The Examiner has identified the “mirror assembly 90” in Crotty for allegedly disclosing a cover element that is provided in the form a frame. Assuming arguendo that the “mirror assembly 90” is a cover element provided in the form of a frame, Applicants submit that neither the “T-shaped peg 100” nor the “groove 106” (i.e., the structures identified by the Examiner for allegedly disclosing a first sliding element and a second sliding element) are provided on a frame (i.e., the “mirror assembly 90”). In contrast, Crotty discloses that the “T-shaped peg 100” and the “groove 106” take the place of the “first aligning elements 50” and the “receiving holes 54,” which are provided on either the “inner core member 16” and the “upholstery material 22” respectively, and not on the “mirror assembly 90.”

Applicants further submit that Gokuritsu does not correct this deficiency in Crotty. For example, contrary to the position of the Examiner, Gokuritsu does not disclose, teach or suggest a first sliding element that cooperates with a second sliding element for locking the cover element relative to the structural part, at least relative to a movement perpendicular to the plane. The Examiner has identified the “third engagement part 8” and the “mounting means 13” in Gokuritsu as disclosing first and second sliding elements. Assuming arguendo that the “third engagement part 8” and the “mounting means 13” are first and second sliding elements, Applicants submit that the engagement of these structures does not lock a cover element to a structural part at least relative to a movement perpendicular to a plane in which the sliding elements are configured to slide, as required by independent Claims 1 and 11. In contrast, Gokuritsu discloses the use of “nail means 12” to lock the “lamp body 1” to the “body 2” relative to a movement perpendicular to a plane in which the “third engagement part 8” slides relative to the “mounting means 13” (see Figure 5). Based on Applicants understanding of Gokuritsu, rather than a providing a locking function, the “third engagement part 8” is a spacer or filler that deforms when engaged with the “mounting means 13” to resist the locking force of “nail means 12.” Without the presence of the “nail means 12,” the “lamp body 1” would not be locked to the

“body 2” in a direction perpendicular to the sliding movement of the “third engagement part 8” (see Figure 3). As such, Gokuritsu does not disclose, teach or suggest sliding elements that slide along a plane for interconnection and also provide a locking function in a direction perpendicular to the plane.

Further still, Applicants disagree that at the time of the invention it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to employ a snap-in connection, as allegedly taught by Gokuritsu, with the sun visor of Crotty. Crotty discloses a sun visor assembly having “pegs 100” disposed on an “inner core member 16” that are configured to receive by “insertion openings 108” provided on an “outer cover assembly 18.” Crotty teaches that during a process in which the “outer cover assembly” is folded over the “inner core member 16” and attached to itself, the “pegs 100” slide within “mating groove slots 110” (col. 5, lines 15-40). One of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would not have been motivated to add an additional connection (e.g., a snap-in connection, etc.) between the “inner core member 16” and the “outer core member 18” because Crotty expressly teaches that the fastening of the “outer cover assembly 18” onto itself locks the two members together and prevents them from becoming misaligned (col. 5, lines 40-45). The suggestion to make the combination of Crotty and Gokuritsu has been taken from the Applicants’ own specification (using hindsight), which is improper.

Further still, with specific reference to independent Claim 11, Applicants submits that neither Crotty nor Gokuritsu disclose, teach or suggest a first set of three sliding elements that are configured to be connected to a second set of three sliding elements (see Figure 5 of Crotty and Figure 2 of Gokuritsu).

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of independent Claims 1 and 11 because at least one element of such claims is not disclosed, taught or suggested by Crotty, whether taken alone or in proper combination with and Gokuritsu. Claim 7, which depends from independent Claim 1, is allowable therewith for at least the same reasons set forth above. As set forth above, Claims 5, 9, 10, 12 and 13 have been canceled without prejudice to

further prosecution on the merits. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1, 7 and 11 is respectfully requested.

2. Claim 8

On page 8 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner rejected Claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crotty in view of obvious common knowledge. Without addressing the merits of this rejection, Applicants submit that this rejection is now moot. As set forth above, Claim 8 has been canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits. Applicants reserve the right to respond to the allegation of Official Notice in future proceedings if necessary.

3. Claims 14, 16, 18 and 20

On pages 5-6 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 14-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gokuritsu in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,365,416 to Peterson (“Peterson”). This rejection should be withdrawn because Gokuritsu, whether alone or in any proper combination with Peterson, fails to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed invention.

For example, independent Claim 14 (as amended) recites a “sun visor for use in a vehicle” comprising, among other elements, a “structural part having a first set of sliding elements . . . [a] cover element having at least one main extension direction, substantially in a plane, and a second set of sliding elements configured to interconnect with the first set of sliding elements to lock the cover element to the structural part with at least one of the body part and the decorative material therebetween, at least relative to a movement perpendicular to the plane, at least one of the first set of sliding elements and the second set of sliding elements being in the plane, the first set of sliding elements and the second set of sliding elements being arranged to be locked by a connecting movement of one of the cover element and the structural part, relative to

the other, the connecting movement being carried out in the plane and in a direction substantially tangential to the at least one main extension direction of the cover element.”

Gokuritsu, whether alone or in any proper combination with Peterson, fails to disclose, teach or suggest such a sun visor for use in a vehicle. In rejecting Claims 14, 16, 18 and 20, the Examiner stated:

Gokuritsu discloses a vehicular room lamp comprising: a structural part (2) having a first set of sliding elements (8) disposed on a first side of the structural part; a cover element (10) having at least one main extension direction, substantially in a plane, and a second set of sliding elements (13) configured to interconnect with the first set of sliding elements to couple the cover element to the structural part, at least one of the first set of sliding elements and the second set of sliding elements being in the plane, the first set of sliding elements and the second set of sliding elements being arranged to be coupled by a connecting movement of one of the cover element and the structural part, relative to the other, the connecting movement being carried out in the plane; and a snap-in connection (6, 11) provided between the cover element and the structural part for locking the cover element relative to the structural part relative to a movement in the plane.

Applicants respectfully disagree. Specifically, Applicants submit that Gokuritsu does not disclose, teach or suggest the sliding elements recited in Claim 14. Similar to the argument set forth above, Applicants submit that Gokuritsu does not disclose, teach or suggest a first sliding element that interconnects with a second sliding element to lock a cover element to a structural part with at least one of a body part and a decorative material therebetween, at least relative to a movement perpendicular to a plane in which the first and second sliding elements slide to interconnect. The Examiner has identified the “third engagement part 8” and the “mounting means 13” in Gokuritsu as disclosing first and second sliding elements. Assuming arguendo that the “third engagement part 8” and the “mounting means 13” are first and second sliding elements, Applicants submit that the engagement of these structures does not lock a cover element to a structural part at least relative to a movement perpendicular to a plane in which the sliding elements are configured to slide, as required by independent Claim 14. In contrast,

Gokuritsu discloses the use of “nail means 12” to lock the “lamp body 1” to the “body 2” relative to a movement perpendicular to a plane in which the “third engagement part 8” slides relative to the “mounting means 13” (see Figure 5). Based on Applicants understanding of Gokuritsu, rather than a providing a locking function, the “third engagement part 8” is a spacer or filler that deforms when engaged with the “mounting means 13” to resist the locking force of “nail means 12.” Without the presence of the “nail means 12,” the “lamp body 1” would not be locked to the “body 2” in a perpendicular direction (see Figure 3). As such, Gokuritsu does not disclose, teach or suggest sliding elements that slide along a plane for interconnection and also provide a locking function in a direction perpendicular to the plane.

Applicants also submit that Peterson does not correct this deficiency in Gokuritsu. As acknowledged by the Examiner, Peterson does not disclose, teach or suggest a sliding connection. In contrast, Peterson discloses the type of sun visor discussed in the Background of the present Application (see, e.g., paragraph [0004]). Specifically, Peterson discloses a “frame 128” that is configured to be secured to a “core 18” by an insertion movement that is perpendicular to face of the “core 18” (col. 4, lines 48-53). During such movement, “hooks 136” provided on the “frame 128” engage “hooks 122 and 124” provided on the “core 18” in a snap-on arrangement to removably secure the “frame 128” to the “core 18” (see Fig. 3).

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of independent Claim 14 because at least one element of such claims is not disclosed, taught or suggested by Gokuritsu, whether taken alone or in proper combination with and Peterson. Further, Applicants continue to believe that Peterson teaches away from a connecting movement between the “frame 128” and the “core 18” in any direction other than a direction that is perpendicular to face of the “core 18” since the “hooks 136” on the “frame 128” must be inserted through “access openings 30” provided in a “cover 22” (col. 4, lines 51-53). As such, one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would not have been motivated to modify the sun visor described in Peterson to allow for a connecting movement in at least one of a plane of a cover element, as required by independent Claim 14 (as amended). Applicants also continue to believe that

suggestion to make the combination of Peterson and Gokuritsu has been taken from the Applicants' own specification (using hindsight), which is improper.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 14. Claim 18, which depends from independent Claim 14, is allowable therewith for at least the same reasons set forth above. Claims 16 and 20 have been canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 14 and 18 is respectfully requested.

4. Claim 19

On page 11 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner rejected Claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gokuritsu in view of obvious common knowledge. Without addressing the merits of this rejection, Applicants submit that this rejection is now moot. As set forth above, Claim 19 has been canceled without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits. Applicants reserve the right to respond to the allegation of Official Notice in future proceedings if necessary.

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Applicants respectfully submit that each and every pending rejection has been overcome, and that the present Application is in a condition for allowance. In particular, even when the elements of Applicants' claims, as discussed above, are given a broad construction and interpreted to cover equivalents, the cited references do not teach, disclose, or suggest the claimed subject matter. Favorable reconsideration of the Application is respectfully requested.

Further, Applicants respectfully put the Patent Office and all others on notice that all arguments, representations, and/or amendments contained herein are only applicable to the present Application and should not be considered when evaluating any other patent or patent application including any patents or patent applications which claim priority to this patent

application and/or any patents or patent applications to which priority is claimed by this patent application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, the Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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